

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ISO-00 AID-20 IO-14 OMB-01 NIC-01

DPW-01 SR-02 ORM-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 843  
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY  
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AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
USLO PEKING  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 4935

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, PK, BG

SUBJECT: INDIA-PAKISTAN-BANGLADESH AGREEMENTS

REF: NEW DELHI 4840 AND 4860 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: INSPECTION OF THE TRILATERAL AGREEMENT AND DISCUSSION  
WITH INDIAN OFFICIALS CONFIRM OUR INITIAL IMPRESSION THAT PAKISTAN  
GAVE VERY LITTLE IN RETURN FOR AGREEMENT TO REPATRIATE THE  
195 POWS ACCUSED OF WAR CRIMES TRIALS (OTHER THAN RECOGNITION  
OF BANGLADESH IN FEBRUARY). THE BENEFIT FOR INDIA LIES  
IN THE FUTURE GENERAL LESSENING OF TENSION ON THE SUBCONTINENT --  
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BUT NOT THE PRESENT. INDIAN OFFICIALS SEEM SLIGHTLY MORE SANGUINE

THAN BEFORE ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR A LEAST LIMITED NORMALIZATION OF INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS. THEY STILL ANTICIPATE STEADY IMPROVEMENT IN PAKISTAN-BANGLADESH RELATIONS. ON THE INDIA-BANGLADESH SIDE OF THE TRIANGLE, THEY NOTE THAT SHEIKH MUJIB'S TRANSIT STOP HERE APRIL 10 DID NOT PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS AND THAT SOME PROBLEMS REMAIN. END SUMMARY.

1. TRIPARTITE TALKS: THE PROBLEM, ACCORDING TO INDIAN OFFICIALS, WAS TO FIND A FACE-SAVING DEVICE. THEY, AND ONE MEMBER OF THE BANGLADESH TEAM TO WHOM WE TALKED, ADMIT THAT BANGLADESH DIDN'T GET MUCH IN RETURN FOR GIVING UP THE WAR CRIMES TRIALS OF THE 195 POWS. AT BEST, THESE OFFICIALS SEE THE AGREEMENT AS AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE; AT WORST, TWO OF THE INDIANS ARGUED THAT BANGLADESH PLAYED ITS CARDS BADLY AND COULD HAVE GOTTEN MORE FROM PAKISTAN ON THE QUESTION OF REPATRIATION TO PAKISTAN OF NON-BENGALIS. THEY UNANIMOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGED THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PAKISTANI NEGOTIATING TACTICS WHILE COMMENTING THAT THESE ARE EXCESSIVELY TOUGH AT TIMES.

2. NON-BENGALI (BIHARI) REPATRIATION: INDIAN OFFICIALS THINK THAT SOME MORE BIHARIS WILL BE REPATRIATED AS A RESULT OF PAKISTAN'S AGREEMENT TO REIVE APPLICATIONS ALREADY SUBMITTED AND ITS REITERATION, IN WRITING, THAT IT WILL SET NO LIMIT ON REPATRIATION OF BIHARIS FALLING INTO THE FIRST THREE CATEGORIES AGREED TO AT THE DITCHDIGGINGS LAST FALL. BUT THEY BELIEVE THAT THE TOTAL OF ADDITIONAL REPATRIATIONS WILL BE SMALL-- PERHAPS IN THE TENS OF THOUSANDS BUT CERTAINLY LESS THAN 100,000. PAKISTAN WILL HAVE THE FINAL SAY. IT MAY WANT TO TAKE SOME MORE BIHARIS FOR THE SAKE OF ITS RELATIONS WITH BANGLADESH, BUT THIS WILL NOT BE ENOUGH TO MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL DENT IN THE BIHARI POPULATION IN BANGLADESH. THE BIHARIS COULD BECOME AN ISSUE IN INDO-BANGLADESH RELATIONS IF ANY SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER FLED TO INDIA AFTER BEING REFUSED REPATRIATION TO PAKISTAN.

3. INDIA-PAKISTAN BILATERAL RELATIONS -- THIS SUBJECT WAS HANDLED LARGELY AT THE OFFICIAL LEVEL RATHER THAN BY THE FOREIGN MINISTERS. INDIAN OFFICIALS INVOLVED FEEL THAT AS A RESULT OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS  
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THE TWO SIDES ACHIEVED GENERAL UNDERSTANDING. INDIA AGREED TO GO AHEAD WITH TALKS ON THE PRIORITY ISSUES OF TRAVEL AND POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS. INDIA GOT PAKISTANI RECOGNITION THAT THIS WOULD INVOLVE MORE THAN SIMPLY REINSTITUTING THE OLD ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAVEL AND COMMUNICATIONS. INDIA ALSO GOT A VAGUE REFERENCE TO THE "OTHER" ASPECTS OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS MENTIONED IN THE SIMLA AGREEMENT.

INDIAN OFFICIALS FEEL THE TALKS ON THE PRIORITY ISSUES MAY BEGIN AS EARLY AS NEXT MONTH, EVEN WHILE INDIA AND PAKISTAN ARE STILL EXCHANGING MESSAGES ABOUT THE "OTHER" ISSUES. PAKISTAN DIDN'T PUSH FOR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS; INDIA DIDN'T PRESS FOR OVERFLIGHTS. IN GENERAL INDIA CONTINUES TO WANT TO MOVE AHEAD ONLY AS FAST AS PAKISTAN WISHES. THE PAKISTANIS TOLD US THEY FELT THE SAME WAY WHEN WE SPOKE TO THEM HERE. THE INDIANS THINK THE NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH PAKISTAN (TO TAKE PLACE IN PAKISTAN) WILL AGAIN BE DIFFICULT AND EXTENDED AND THAT, WHILE PROGRESS WILL CONTINUE TO BE MADE, IT WILL BE SLOW GOING.

4. PAKISTAN-BANGLADESH RELATIONS: INDIAN OFFICIALS EXPECT PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH TO ESTABLISH BOTH TRADE AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS FAIRLY QUICKLY. THEY DON'T SEE THE BIHARIS OR THE DIVISION OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS STANDING IN THE WAY OF EITHER. (ONE MEMBER OF THE BANGLADESH TEAM SUGGESTED THAT TRADE INVOLVING PAKISTANI SHIPS OR AIRCRAFT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT BEFORE THE DIVISION OF ASSETS WAS SETTLED.)

5. INDIA-BANGLADESH RELATIONS: ALTHOUGH SEIKH MUJIB VISITED DELHI FOR SOMETHING OVER 24 HOURS APRIL 10-11, THIS IN NO WAY REPLACED HIS STATE VISIT ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR LATE MARCH, ACCORDING TO BOTH INDIAN AND BANGLADESH OFFICIALS HERE. IT WAS SIMPLY A TRANSIT STOP. THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS MET ALONE, WITHOUT AIDES AND POSITION PAPERS, FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF APRIL 10 AND AGAIN FOR 10 MINUTES APRIL 11. DISCUSSION WAS GENERAL AND CENTERED ON SUCH THINGS AS THE ENERGY CRISIS AND THE TRIPARTITE TALKS. ANOTHER LONG SESSION ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED WAS CANCELED BECAUSE OF THE SHEIKH'S FATIGUE AFTER THE FLIGHT FROM MOSCOW. THE TWO SIDES FAILED TO DISCUSS OUTSTANDING INDO-BANGLADESH BILATERAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS THE DIVERSION OF THE GANGES BY THE FARAKKA BARRAGE.

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